

Psychology Internship Program



VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System

Mental Health Service (116)
975 Kirman Avenue
Reno, NV 89502
(775) 786-7200
<http://www.reno.va.gov/>



MATCH Number Program Code: 143911

Applications Due: Tuesday, November 1, 2022, 7:59 p.m. Pacific

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Emerald Bay, Lake Tahoe

The information provided in this brochure is designed to provide a general description of our program and medical center setting. We look forward to answering any specific questions you might have by e-mail or telephone. The program Training Director is John Wyma, Ph.D., and his contact information is as follows: Email john.wyma@va.gov; phone (775) 786-7200, ext 6581.

Accreditation Status

The pre-doctoral internship at the VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System is fully accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association. Our most recent APA accreditation site visit was in December of 2019, and we were subsequently reaccredited for 10 years.

Contact information for the APA Commission on Accreditation is:

Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation
American Psychological Association
750 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002-4242
202-336-5979
TDD/TTY: (202) 336-6123
Fax: (202) 336-5978
apaaccred@apa.org

Updated July 2022

Application & Selection Procedures

OUR APPIC INTERNSHIP MATCHING PROGRAM CODE # IS 143911.

Our program utilizes the APPIC Application for Psychology Internship (AAPI) process. This means students only need to complete one application for all APPIC registered sites. The AAPI is available through the APPIC web site, www.appic.org. Please go to the APPIC web site for more information on accessing and completing the online application, as well as application deadlines.

Please be aware that the “**Academic Program’s Verification of Internship Eligibility and Readiness**” form is to be submitted ELECTRONICALLY to the internship site by your graduate program Director of Clinical Training. Instructions regarding this part of the application process are contained in the online AAPI.



Wingfield Park, Truckee River, downtown Reno

Completed applications are initially reviewed by the Training Director to screen for basic eligibility. Enrollment in an APA- or CPA-approved doctoral PhD or PsyD program in Clinical, Counseling, or Combined psychology or a Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System (PCSAS) accredited program in Clinical Science is required. Persons with a doctorate in another area of psychology who meet the APA or CPA criteria for respecialization training in Clinical, Counseling, or Combined Psychology are also eligible. Completion of the dissertation/project proposal is required. Applicants must be approved for internship by their program’s Director of Clinical Training. Other eligibility requirements are listed below.



Springtime on the Hunter Creek Trail, west of Reno

After initial review by the Training Director, applications meeting basic eligibility requirements are reviewed by two staff psychologists and then ranked according to a number of criteria, including number of practicum hours, assessment and intervention experience; variety and quality of practicum placements; and letters of recommendation. Applicants’ introduction letters and responses to essay questions on the AAPI are also reviewed to gauge the “goodness of fit” between the student and our training site. We seek applicants who have a strong academic foundation from their university program and who have mastered basic skills in evidence-based assessment and intervention techniques through their practicum experiences.

The majority of our patients are middle-aged or older adults who present with combined medical and psychiatric symptoms, and we prefer applicants who demonstrate an interest in this population through their past exposure to similar training experiences and articulation of such interest in terms of future career goals. See the section below, [Internship Program Tables](#), for more information.

As part of the application process, we hold interviews by invitation only. Due to ongoing health concerns presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the wide variability of financial resources available to

well-qualified applicants, all our interviews will be conducted online. If you cannot make arrangements for videoconference-based interviews, we will attempt to schedule telephone interviews. Instructions for interviews will be sent when applicants are notified of interview invitations. Please note that due to the changing landscape surrounding the pandemic, we may find it necessary to change dates or interview processes. Interviewees will be notified of any such changes at the earliest opportunity. If interviewees desire a visit to our facility, we will make every effort to make arrangements for this, although in-person visits will not factor into our ranking strategy for applicants.

We greatly value diverse experiences and backgrounds as the building blocks of a rich training environment. As such, the program emphasizes respect for trainees, patients, and staff members representing all forms of diversity, including (but not limited to) ethnicity, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, Veteran status, and political affiliation. Interns are entitled to equal treatment in selection decisions and freedom from harassment or unfair treatment. If an intern feels that any form of discrimination is occurring, he/she is encouraged to discuss this with the Training Director and/or follow the grievance processes which are outlined in our program Handbook and/or VA Equal Employment Opportunity policies.

The program seeks to obtain a diverse intern class while selecting the most qualified candidates, and so we strongly encourage individuals from diverse backgrounds to apply. The VA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and the training program follows institutional guidelines in this regard. Information regarding VA's commitment to diversity awareness and education can be found at the website for the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (<https://www.diversity.va.gov/>).

Our agency provides reasonable accommodation to applicants with disabilities where appropriate. If you need reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process, please notify Dr. Wyma, the internship Training Director, by telephone or email. Determinations on requests for reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis.

NOTIFICATION AND INTERVIEWS

Applicants will be notified regarding invitations to interview with us by **Friday, November 18, 2022** via e-mail. If you do not have an e-mail address, you will need to phone the Training Director to inquire as to your status. Dr. Wyma's phone is 775-786-7200, x6581.

Because of the fluctuating nature of the pandemic and changing travel guidance and restrictions, as well as our commitment to equal opportunity for interested applicants, we are **only conducting interviews via videoconference or telephone** this year. If you are invited for an interview, **we will ask that you make a firm commitment to one of the dates listed below**. If neither date is possible, limited alternative dates may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Interview slots are limited on those days and will be arranged on a first-come, first-served basis. Many applicants and interviewers at our own and other VAs have found videoconference interviews to be preferable to telephone interviews. If you are invited to interview with us, we will ask which of these options you would like. Failure to take part in a scheduled video or telephone interview will result in your application being withdrawn from further consideration.

Plan on being connected in for your selected interview date from 8:00 AM until approximately 4:00 PM. You will be joining other applicants in a group format during the morning hours in meetings with the Training Director and current Psychology Interns, as well as meeting many of our rotation supervisors. Interviewees will be given the opportunity to hear from supervisors regarding each rotation and opportunities provided through the training year. During the afternoon, invitees will meet with staff psychologists for two individual interviews. The interviews are evaluated according to several factors, including your responses to questions about difficult situations you've handled in the past, questions about difficult diagnostic dilemmas and treatment challenges you've faced, and how well our site aligns with your training needs and interests. You will be presented with a case description so that you can respond to structured questions about diagnostic impressions, assessment strategies you might consider using to assist with diagnosis, and possible treatment modalities or further referral you might recommend.

INTERVIEW DATES FOR 2023-2024 TRAINING YEAR:

- **Thursday, January 5, 2023**
- **Thursday, January 12, 2023**

Our program is participating in the APPIC Match Program, so you will need to obtain an Applicant Agreement Package from National Matching Services, Inc in order to register for the Match. You can download the Applicant Agreement form at <https://natmatch.com/psychint/>. If you do not register, you will not be eligible to match with any APPIC programs. We recommend that you carefully review the official APPIC Match Policies and the Internship Matching Program Schedule of Dates, which are also available at <https://www.appic.org/>.

If you have questions regarding APPIC procedures, their telephone number is (202) 347-0022. The number for National Matching Services is (416) 977-3431.

For your application to be complete we must receive the following materials by November 1, 2022:

- Online APPIC Application for Psychology Internship (AAPI).
- Your Curriculum Vitae – to be submitted as part of online AAPI.
- Three letters of recommendation – to be submitted as part of online AAPI.
- Graduate school transcripts – to be submitted as part of online AAPI.
- Your Academic Program Verification of Internship Eligibility and Readiness form – to be submitted by your academic program's Director of Training as part of the online AAPI.

Any inquiries about our application process can be submitted to:

John G. Wyma, PhD, ABPP
Mental Health Service (116)
VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System
975 Kirman Avenue
Reno, NV 89502
(775) 786-7200, x6581

All application materials must be submitted electronically, as part of the online AAPI. **Please read all relevant instructions carefully to assure that transcripts, letters of recommendation, and the Academic Program Verification of Internship Eligibility and Readiness forms are submitted in a timely manner. Applications that are not completed by 11:59 pm EST (8:59 pm PST) on November 1, 2022 will not be considered, even if portions of the application have been submitted prior to that date and time.**

As a member of the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Predoctoral Internship Centers (APPIC), our program follows all APPIC policies regarding the intern selection process. This internship site strictly abides by the APPIC policy that no person at this training facility will solicit, accept, or use any ranking related information from any applicant. You are encouraged to read or download the complete text of their regulations governing program membership and the match process from APPIC's Website. Our privacy policy is clear: We will not collect personal information about you when you visit our website. We do not require self-disclosure of sensitive personal information during our interviews.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL VA PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) adheres to all Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action policies. Should you be matched with us, you are considered a Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Health Professions Trainee (HPT), and you will receive a Federal appointment. The following requirements will apply prior to that appointment:

1. **U.S. Citizenship.** HPTs who receive a direct stipend (pay) must be U.S. citizens. Trainees who are not VA paid (without compensation-WOC) who are not U.S. citizens may be appointed and must provide current immigrant, non-immigrant or exchange visitor documents.
2. **U.S. Social Security Number.** All VA appointees must have a U.S. social security number (SSN) prior to beginning the pre-employment, on-boarding process at the VA.
3. **Selective Service Registration.** Male applicants born after 12/31/1959 must have registered for the Selective Service by age 26 to be eligible for U.S. government employment, including selection as a paid or WOC VA trainee. For additional information about the Selective Service System, and to register or to check your registration status visit <https://www.sss.gov/>. Anyone who was required to register but did not register before the age of 26 will need to apply for a Status Information Letter (SIL) and request a waiver. Waivers are rare, and requests will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the VA Office of Human Resources Management. This process can take up to six months for a verdict.
4. **Fingerprint Screening and Background Investigation.** All HPTs will be fingerprinted and undergo screenings and background investigations. Additional details about the required background checks can be found at the following website: <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/10450.html>.
5. **Drug Testing.** Per Executive Order 12564, the VA strives to be a Drug-Free Workplace. HPTs are not drug-tested prior to appointment but, like all employees, are subject to random drug testing throughout the entire VA appointment period. You will be asked to sign an acknowledgement form stating you are aware of this practice. See item 8 below. *Please be aware that at the current time and despite changes in many states' laws related to the medical and/or recreational use of marijuana/cannabis, THC, CBD and related products, federal law prohibits the use of such products by federal employees.* Therefore, detection of such use through random drug tests could result in dismissal from the program despite medical need, the presence of a physician prescription, or the fact that the product may have been legally obtained. Please see the following for more information: [VA Drug-Free Workplace Program Guide for Veterans Health Administration Health Professions Trainees](#)
6. **Affiliation Agreement.** To ensure shared responsibility between an academic program and the VA, there must be a current and fully executed Academic Affiliation Agreement on file with the VHA Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA). The affiliation agreement delineates the duties of VA and the affiliated institution. Most APA-accredited doctoral programs have an agreement on file. More information about this document can be found at <https://www.va.gov/oaa/agreements.asp> (see section on psychology internships). Post-degree programs typically will not have an affiliation agreement, as the HPT is no longer enrolled in an academic program and the program is VA-sponsored.
7. **TQCVL.** To streamline on-boarding of HPTs, VHA Office of Academic Affiliations requires completion of a Trainee Qualifications and Credentials Verification Letter (TQCVL). An Educational Official at the Affiliate (university or professional school) must complete and sign this letter. For post-graduate programs where an affiliate is not the program sponsor, this process must be completed by the VA Training Director. Your VA appointment cannot happen until the TQCVL is submitted by your graduate program's Director of Clinical Training and signed by senior leadership from the VA facility. For more information about this document, please visit <https://www.va.gov/OAA/TQCVL.asp>.
 - a. **Health Requirements.** Among other things, the TQCVL confirms that you, the trainee, are fit to perform the essential functions (physical and mental) of the training program and immunized following current Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines and VHA policy. This includes CDC's and VHA's most recent guidance and/or directives regarding vaccination for other communicable diseases such as COVID-19. This protects you, other

employees, and patients while working in a healthcare facility. Required are annual tuberculosis screening, Hepatitis B vaccine, annual influenza vaccine, and COVID-19 vaccine. *Declination approvals are EXTREMELY rare.* If you decline the required vaccines, you will be required to wear a mask while in patient care areas of the VA.

- b. **Primary source verification of all prior education and training** is certified via the TQCVL. Training and Program Directors will be contacting the appropriate institutions to ensure you have the appropriate qualifications and credentials as required by the admission criteria of the training program in which you are enrolled.

8. **Additional On-boarding Forms.** Additional pre-employment forms include the Application for Health Professions Trainees (VA 10-2850D) and the Declaration for Federal Employment (OF 306). These documents and others are available online for review at <https://www.va.gov/oaa/app-forms.asp>. Falsifying any answer on these required Federal documents will result in the inability to appoint or immediate dismissal from the training program.
9. **Proof of Identity per VA.** VA on-boarding requires presentation of two source documents (IDs) on the first day of employment. Documents must be unexpired and names on both documents must match. For more information visit: https://www.oit.va.gov/programs/piv/_media/docs/IDMatrix.pdf

Information on eligibility is also available at : <https://www.psychologytraining.va.gov/eligibility.asp>

Additional information regarding eligibility requirements:

- Trainees receive term employee appointments and must meet eligibility requirements for appointment as outlined in VA Handbook 5005 Staffing, Part II, Section B. Appointment Requirements and Determinations. See 5005-112 at the following link for more information: https://www.va.gov/vapubs/search_action.cfm?dType=2
- Selective Service website where the requirements, benefits and penalties of registering vs. not registering are outlined: <https://www.sss.gov/Registration/Why-Register/Benefits-and-Penalties>

Specific suitability information from Title 5 (referenced in VHA Handbook 5005 – hyperlinks included):

(b) Specific factors. In determining whether a person is suitable for Federal employment, only the following factors will be considered a basis for finding a person unsuitable and taking a suitability action:

- (1) Misconduct or negligence in employment;*
- (2) Criminal or dishonest conduct;*
- (3) Material, intentional false statement, or deception or fraud in examination or appointment;*
- (4) Refusal to furnish testimony as required by § 5.4 of this chapter;*
- (5) Alcohol abuse, without evidence of substantial rehabilitation, of a nature and duration that suggests that the applicant or appointee would be prevented from performing the duties of the position in question, or would constitute a direct threat to the property or safety of the applicant or appointee or others;*
- (6) Illegal use of narcotics, drugs, or other controlled substances without evidence of substantial rehabilitation;*
- (7) Knowing and willful engagement in acts or activities designed to overthrow the U.S. Government by force; and*
- (8) Any statutory or regulatory bar which prevents the lawful employment of the person involved in the position in question.*

(c) Additional considerations. OPM and agencies must consider any of the following additional considerations to the extent OPM or the relevant agency, in its sole discretion, deems any of them pertinent to the individual case:

- (1) The nature of the position for which the person is applying or in which the person is employed;*

- (2) *The nature and seriousness of the conduct;*
- (3) *The circumstances surrounding the conduct;*
- (4) *The recency of the conduct;*
- (5) *The age of the person involved at the time of the conduct;*
- (6) *Contributing societal conditions; and*
- (7) *The absence or presence of rehabilitation or efforts toward rehabilitation.*

Health Professions Trainees (HPTs) are appointed as temporary employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs. As such, HPTs are subject to laws, policies, and guidelines posted for VA staff members. There are infrequent times in which this guidance can change during a training year which may create new requirements or responsibilities for HPTs. If employment requirements change during the course of a training year, HPTs will be notified of the change and impact as soon as possible and options provided. The Training Director will provide you with the information you need to understand the requirement and reasons for the requirement in timely manner.

Psychology Setting

Psychologists are an integral part of the Mental Health Service at our medical center. We maintain close interdisciplinary relationships with psychiatrists, psychiatric nursing, social work, and substance abuse specialists in our department. We currently have 25 psychologists in our various programs representing a wide variety of academic backgrounds, clinical interests, and areas of expertise. We are proud that several of our former interns have returned to be part of our wonderful psychology team!



2021-22 Cohort with Dr. Wyma

Our psychologists serve a wide variety of administrative and clinical roles within our department and throughout the medical center. Psychologists provide services through the Mental Health Clinic, Behavioral Medicine and Neuropsychology programs, the Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Program (PRRC), the Addictive Disorders Treatment Program (ADTP), the PTSD Clinical Team (PCT), Integrated Behavioral Health Care (IBHC), our Inpatient Behavior Health Unit, the Community Living Center (CLC) and Home-Based Primary Care (HBPC) programs, and our Healthy Living Team. Our psychologists also serve in important leadership roles throughout the medical center, with memberships on committees and task forces outside of Mental Health including the Palliative Care Team, Pain Management Panel, the facility Ethics Committee, and Wellness/Whole Health programs. Psychologists from our medical center have also been appointed to positions at the regional level (Veterans Integrated Service Network 21) in program development and evaluation positions. Several psychologists hold academic appointments with the School of Medicine and/or the Psychology Department at University of Nevada - Reno.

Our facility also serves as a training site for Residents in Psychiatry, Pharmacy, Dentistry, Optometry, Internal Medicine, and Surgery, as well as Nursing students and Social Work Interns. We occasionally offer practicum opportunities students from APA-accredited PhD and PsyD programs.

During the training year, Psychology Interns provide consultation and treatment to several other health care service departments throughout the medical center, including the inpatient Medical, Surgical, ICU, Psychiatry, and Community Living Center units, the Primary Care clinics, and the Emergency Department.

Training Model and Program Philosophy

The VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System is committed to the training of professional psychologists consistent with a practitioner-scholar training model. Within a supportive and collegial atmosphere, we seek to facilitate development of a reflective approach to practice that integrates empirical knowledge and delivery of clinical services. Interns are viewed as making the transition from the student role to the professional colleague role over the course of the training year, honing clinical and communication skills and competencies ultimately required for effective independent practice. Opportunities are offered for continued training in areas of practice with which interns may already be familiar, as well as introduction to assessment strategies, treatment orientations, and other clinical challenges that may be unfamiliar.

At the start of the training year, interns undergo two weeks of Orientation to the Mental Health Service and to the medical center. They visit rotation sites and meet with potential supervisors to compose a training experience that best fits their interests and needs. Trainings are provided in areas such as risk assessment; the VA electronic medical records system; diversity and multicultural issues; principles and general methodology of cognitive behavior therapy and motivational interviewing; military culture, values, and traditions; and other relevant topics. This is also the opportunity to visit each program within the Mental Health Service, which exposes our new interns to the variety of services we offer as well as helps them better define their rotation interests. The Training Director acts as an advocate for interns and for the training program within the medical center and Mental Health Service. The Director meets regularly with interns as a group and individually to hear and respond to their training needs and concerns. Interns receive both formal and informal feedback from supervisors throughout the year.

In addition to formal rotation evaluations by rotation supervisors, interns are also evaluated mid-year and at the end of the training year through a comprehensive competency evaluation provided by the Training Director and the Training Council. Evaluations emphasize the intern's strengths and identify areas in need of improvement. In turn, interns evaluate their supervisors and the supervision experience. Evaluations are mutually shared and discussed between intern and supervisor in an atmosphere that fosters personal and professional development. Written summaries of these evaluations are furnished to the intern. The mid- and end-of-year comprehensive competency evaluations are forwarded on to the Director of Clinical Training at the intern's graduate institution, along with a narrative report of progress.

It is expected that interns will differ in the extent to which they require training in the required competencies and that there may be skills that require focused attention in order to meet competency goals and standards. These issues are typically addressed in supervision, but if significant competency gaps are noted in any of these areas, a formal remediation plan may be established to ensure that those areas needing strengthening are addressed. If we determine that required competency deficits cannot be remediated sufficiently during the internship year, provisional completion of the internship and/or termination from the program will be considered. While rare, there may also be instances where an intern's behaviors, attitudes, or other characteristics detrimentally impact the learning process, relationships with others, and/or patient care. Similar to deficits in training, this is initially addressed informally in individual supervision but may also lead to a remediation plan being implemented or, in cases where remediation efforts are unsuccessful, dismissal from the program.

Program Aims & Required Competencies

In alignment with the APA Council on Accreditation's Standards of Accreditation (<http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation/about/policies/standards-of-accreditation.pdf>), our program has articulated the following Vision Statement, Aims, and required Competencies:

Vision Statement: "To prepare our psychology interns for long-term success in health service psychology."

Aims:

1. To develop in our interns strong core generalist skills in health service psychology through competency-based supervised training.
2. To prepare interns to function competently within an integrated health care system, particularly within the Veterans Health Administration.
3. To support our interns in preparing for the next step in their professional careers.

Profession-Wide Required Competencies:

Research

Ethical and Legal Standards

Individual and Cultural Diversity

Professional Values, Attitudes, and Behaviors Communication and Interpersonal Skills

Assessment

Intervention

Supervision

Consultation and Interprofessional/Interdisciplinary Skills

Program-Specific Required Competency:

Working With Military Veterans

Program Structure

Our internship offers full-time, generalist training in the practice of professional psychology within a multidisciplinary Veterans Affairs medical center. We accept 4 interns per year. Our program is fully accredited by the American Psychological Association and complies with all standards and regulations of the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC), as well as APPIC Match Policies and Procedures. **The 2023-24 training year begins on Monday, July 31, 2023 and ends on July 26, 2024.** The anticipated federal stipend is \$26,735.

Updated July 2022

The internship training year includes **three, 4-month long rotations** in the practice of clinical psychology. Required and optional rotations are described below. We utilize an apprenticeship model of training, where the intern begins each rotation by observing their supervisor and then gradually transitions into more independent functioning. Our program emphasizes training in the practice of clinical psychology, so research activities will generally be limited to those that directly support or are adjunctive to clinical work. Administrative and program evaluation experiences may be possible in various rotations or as a long-term experience, which is described in the following section. One benefit of our smaller program is that all interns have the opportunity to take part in a variety of rotation experiences.

The program also includes **weekly Didactic Seminars**, covering a wide variety of topics such as psychological assessment, individual and cultural diversity, law and ethics, and empirically supported treatments. A monthly **Journal Club** provides interns with an opportunity to present and interact with each other on current research relevant to the work of a psychologist and to consider how the research might be applied to practice, individually and systemically. **Group Supervision** is offered to enhance both personal and professional growth as the year progresses. Cases are discussed, as well as issues related to professional development and, as the year progresses, interns are given the opportunity to engage in peer supervision. In addition, we offer a **Mentor Program**, in which interns select a psychologist with whom they can meet individually throughout the year for ongoing support and encouragement and to discuss concerns and professional development issues in a safe, confidential and non-evaluative atmosphere. The program is always evolving and growing to improve quality and to reflect advances in training theory and practice.

We encourage interns to adhere to a 40-hour work week, although fluctuations in workload may sometimes require limited overtime work or use of free time to pursue training-related readings. Approximately 32 hours of the 40-hour work week are devoted to patient contact and related administrative duties, with the remaining 8 hours reserved for seminars, supervision meetings, training in clinical supervision, and other learning opportunities. Interns receive at least 4 hours of supervision per week, including at least two hours of scheduled individual supervision, 2 hours of weekly group supervision, and impromptu or "hallway" supervision contacts throughout the week. Direct in-room supervision of clinical work is provided, consistent with the goal of appropriate progress through graduated levels of responsibility as the intern advances through rotations and gains increasing skill across the training year. Some supervisors utilize audio and/or video recording of client sessions to enhance the provision of individual supervision. Also consistent with our commitment to graduated levels of responsibility, there are opportunities to co-lead psychoeducational and psychotherapy treatment groups with supervisors or professionals of other disciplines and to observe the administration of psychological tests prior to transitioning into independent test administration. Interns may have the opportunity to provide mentoring and supervision to psychology and/or social work trainees, though availability of this experience cannot be guaranteed at this time.

Rotations & Training Experiences

We anticipate the following rotations in the 2023-24 academic year:

- **Mental Health Clinic (full- or half-time):** During this rotation, interns have an opportunity to practice conducting intake interviews, outpatient group and individual psychotherapy, and completing psychological assessments such as personality, ADHD, or Learning Disorder. On this rotation, interns will have an opportunity to continue working on their differential diagnosis skills, building their repertoire of evidence-based treatments in both individual and group modalities, working on formulation of and ongoing case conceptualization, as well as continue finetuning their clinical skills through close individual supervision. Given the general mental health nature of MHC, it provides an especially ideal setting for the further development of differential diagnosis and case conceptualization competencies. Examples of

some of the current groups include Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Depression, Anxiety, and Insomnia; Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) for Anxiety and Mood Concerns; Anger Management; Mindfulness; and much more. The MHC is comprised of team members from multiple disciplines, including psychologists, social workers, nurse practitioners, and psychiatrists. Interns are encouraged to interact and consult with other disciplines informally and during scheduled program meetings and as needed.

- **Behavioral Medicine Consultation and Liaison Service (BMed) (full- or half-time):** During this rotation, the intern will have the opportunity to work with the Behavioral Medicine Consultation & Liaison Service. The psychologists on this team respond to consultation requests from the inpatient Medicine, Mental Health, Surgery, ICU, and Community Living Center units. The intern will conduct brief neuropsychological screening evaluations, utilize interview and questionnaire data to evaluate psychiatric symptoms, and generate reports describing their findings to assist physicians, nurses, and other treatment team members in planning for patient discharge and ongoing outpatient care. Interns will also participate in daily rounds where team members discuss current patient status and there will be ample opportunity to interface with attending physicians and resident physicians, as well as other team members, from the medicine, surgery, geriatrics, and palliative/hospice teams. Interested interns may also work with the psychologist covering Home Based Primary Care. The intern will also spend time working with the psychologists and social workers covering the Emergency Department, evaluating Veterans who present with a variety of psychiatric concerns, including those with suicidal/homicidal ideation and other psychiatric crises. Interns are encouraged to take part in outpatient treatment modalities that relate to the practice of Behavioral Medicine, e.g., pain management group, cancer support group, CBT for insomnia, smoking cessation classes, etc.

- **PTSD Clinical Team (PCT) (full- or half-time):** During this rotation, the intern will be trained in and conduct intake evaluations and psychotherapy with patients who are referred to the PTSD Clinical Team (PCT) for evaluation of PTSD and trauma/stressor-related disorders. Psychotherapy groups which may be open to intern participation and co-facilitation currently include Cognitive Processing Therapy, Skills Training in Affective and Interpersonal Regulation (STAIR), and CBT for Insomnia. Interns also conduct individual psychotherapy, which often focuses on teaching coping skills for PTSD. Interns who demonstrate strong foundational psychotherapy skills may be approved to provide individual trauma focused psychotherapy (Cognitive Processing Therapy or Prolonged Exposure). The intern will attend our weekly interdisciplinary team meetings. Training focuses on developing strong differential diagnostic and treatment planning skills.

- **Addictive Disorders Treatment Program (ADTP) (full- or half-time):** The ADTP rotation consists of evaluations and interventions for veterans referred for substance use disorders and/or gambling disorder in an outpatient setting. Evaluation experiences will include screening appointments, intakes, and psychological assessment batteries, with particular emphasis on differential diagnostic skills and formulating appropriate treatment recommendations. Intervention experiences will primarily be in the group format, with treatment modalities ranging from CBT, Mindfulness-based, and 12-Step approaches. Individual intervention opportunities may also be available, with particular emphasis on developing Motivational Interviewing skills. Other opportunities may include inpatient consults, inpatient groups, individual and/or group interventions for gambling disorder, and exposure to Suboxone (buprenorphine) treatment for opioid use disorder with medical staff. Interns will attend weekly case conference and staff meetings with the multidisciplinary ADTP team.

- **Integrated Behavioral Health Clinic (full- or half-time):** The Integrated Behavioral Healthcare (IBHC) Program utilizes a blended model, combining a co-located, collaborative care model with care management to address the needs of a diverse patient population presenting in the primary care setting. During this rotation, the IBHC intern collaborates with primary care providers, RNs, and pharmacists on a regular basis. Additionally, other treatment providers (including social work, dietitians, and specialty medical and mental health providers) are consulted on an as-needed basis. It is a busy, relatively fast paced program. Interns who succeed in this rotation learn to quickly assess patient needs via a focused assessment; present the case very concisely to a supervisor or to a physician to inform or to implement

immediate plans for change; be available for “curbside” consultations and warm handoffs from medical providers; develop an overall treatment plan for behavioral health intervention, which may include a multidisciplinary approach; and provide brief, evidence-based treatment for a wide variety of both medical and behavioral components of health related issues. Additionally, brief cognitive evaluations are frequently requested and administered by IBHC interns and psychology staff. The intern is included in both IBHC team and Primary Care staff meetings, as well as other team meetings which may align with training goals or interests.

- **Geropsychology (full-time only):** Geropsychology offers the opportunity to deliver geriatric services in the Community Living Center and through Home Based Primary Care (HBPC). The CLC is a skilled nursing facility where interns work with veterans, many of whom are older adults undergoing short-stay or long-stay rehabilitation. The CLC also has dedicated beds for veterans admitted for palliative care for chronic illnesses, and hospice care at the end of life. In contrast, HBPC gives interns exposure to home bound older adults living in the community who are adapting to the challenges of disability and aging in place. In these settings, the intern typically works on interprofessional teams and provides conceptualizations from a biopsychosocial perspective while collaborating with providers from a number of disciplines. In addition, the intern may educate other providers on these teams about psychological and/or aging issues through consultation. The intern performs assessment (e.g., psychological, cognitive, neuropsychological, decision-making and capacity, risk, etc.) and intervention skills commonly used for older adult issues (e.g., grief, end-of-life, caregiving, chronic health problems, role/life transitions, etc.).
- **Neuropsychological Assessment (full- or half-time):** During this rotation, the intern will conduct neuropsychological evaluations on veterans referred for testing for a variety of concerns including effects of traumatic brain injury and possible dementia. The intern will gain exposure to a variety of test batteries depending on the referral question and will also be responsible for writing a comprehensive neuropsychological report for each veteran they evaluate.
- **Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Program (PRRC) (half-time only):** During this rotation, the intern will provide services in our intensive outpatient program for veterans diagnosed with serious mental illness (SMI) such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. The intern is fully involved in all aspects of the program and will have opportunity to conduct intakes, complete individual recovery plans, provide individual and group therapy, and complete cognitive and personality screenings. The PRRC team works closely with the RANGE team, which provides community case management; interns will have the opportunity to work with this team in the community as well. Interns will work on a multidisciplinary team including psychologists, social workers, psychiatrists, peer supports, and nurse practitioners. Interns will gain exposure to evidence-based treatments for SMI and will be given the opportunity to create groups of interest for this population.
- **Mental Health Leadership and Administration (half-time only):** This rotation provides interns the opportunity to work with Mental Health Service leaders to develop an understanding of the administrative roles of psychologists within the VA system. Interns in this rotation will have the opportunity to participate in program development and process improvement projects as well as the opportunity to understand the collaborative relationship of senior leadership across services through participation in senior level meetings and possibly facility-level projects. Trainees will become familiar with and help examine data to identify opportunities for improvement and the support of best practices. Exploration of leadership styles and approaches will occur through readings, exercises, and discussions.

Additional rotations may be included as staffing and program resources allow.

ASSESSMENT AND PSYCHOTHERAPY REQUIREMENTS

To ensure that all interns meet our basic goals for generalist training, the following requirements have been established for experience in providing psychological assessment and psychotherapy:

a. **Assessment Requirement** – Each intern is required to complete at least six comprehensive integrated psychological assessments during the course of the internship year and will be assigned a primary supervisor for this requirement. This is a minimum requirement, and particular rotations may require additional assessments, such as Neuropsychology. These can be provided within the context of the intern's current rotation or through the Assessment Clinic. The assessments will include a review of available patient records, a thorough biopsychosocial interview, a mental status examination, and administration of appropriate symptom inventories and standardized psychological tests, as appropriate to the case and referral questions. Assessment supervision may be provided by a psychologist within the intern's current rotation or another qualified psychologist within the Mental Health Service who will take full supervisory responsibility for this part of the intern's work.

b. **Psychotherapy Requirement** – Interns are expected to carry at least two longer-term individual psychotherapy cases across the course one or more rotations during the training year and, as with the Assessment Requirement, will be assigned a psychologist who will oversee this requirement. This may occur within the context of the intern's current rotation or in conjunction with their rotation activities. The goal is to develop or enhance basic psychotherapy skills through the course of a complete episode of care, (i.e., beginning, middle, and end phases of treatment). Cases may be assigned by the primary supervisor or, in rotations where longer-term psychotherapy is not part of the range of services normally provided, by another psychologist who has agreed to supervise those cases. Therapy modalities may include specific evidence-based treatments such as CBT for Depression, ACT, DBT, PE, CPT, or others, but may also include other modalities (e.g., psychodynamic, interpersonal, and behavior therapies) not necessarily officially considered by VA to be evidence-based.

LONG-TERM FOCUSED EXPERIENCE (Optional): Psychology interns have the opportunity to participate in one or more long-term supervised experiences to explore specific areas of clinical or research interest and in which to receive more in-depth training. Interns will be provided with a list of available supervisors and their specialty areas (e.g., PTSD, addictions, DBT, neuropsychology, geropsychology, ACT, eating disorders, Motivational Interviewing, pain management, smoking cessation, MOVE! weight management program, SMI, personality assessment, etc.). Interns will be allowed to choose a supervisor based on availability, interest, gaps in training, or enhancement of current skills.

Requirements for Completion

Our required competencies were listed in an earlier section of this document. Specific skills for each competency area are rated across six levels:

- 1 = Does not demonstrate basic skill on this element
- 2 = Demonstrates minimal skill on this element
- 3 = Demonstrates basic skill but requires further supervisory instruction
- 4 = Demonstrates intermediate skill
- 5 = Demonstrates an intermediate-to-advanced level of skill on this element
- 6 = Demonstrates an advanced level of skill on this element

Evaluation Processes

Rotation Evaluations: It is our experience that most interns will progress from level 2 or 3 (minimal or basic skill) to 5 (intermediate-to-advanced skill) on each required element on rotation evaluations over the course of the training year.

- At conclusion of the **first rotation**, interns are expected to achieve ratings of “3” or higher on at least 75% of the elements in each competency area, with no ratings below “2”.
- At the conclusion of the **second rotation**, ratings of “4” or higher on at least 75% of elements are expected, with no ratings below “3”.
- By the conclusion of the **third rotation**, interns are expected to achieve a rating of “5” on 75% of all elements in each competency area, with no ratings below “4”.

Mid- and End-of-Year Comprehensive Competency Evaluations: The Comprehensive Competency Evaluation is the primary tool used by our program to evaluate and document overall progress as interns move through the training year. After completion by the Training Director and Training Council and sharing the evaluation results with the intern, it is forwarded to the intern’s university Director of Clinical Training along with a narrative report on intern strengths and areas of anticipated or needed growth. It integrates information from rotation evaluations, ongoing monthly progress reviews by the Training Council, and participation in activities such as Journal Club, weekly seminar, Group Supervision, and other training activities.

Minimum Levels of Achievement

- For the **mid-year** Comprehensive Competency Evaluation, interns are required to achieve ratings of “4” or above on all “Critical Elements,” which are identified with “CE” next to those items.
- Ratings of “3” or above are expected on all “non-Critical” elements by mid-year.
- On the **final, end-of-year** Comprehensive Competency Evaluation, ratings of “5” or above are required on all Critical Elements.
- Of the remaining non-Critical elements, ratings of “5” or above are required on at least 75% of those elements, with no elements lower than “4”.
- Performance below the expected levels will trigger a review of the intern’s progress by the rotation supervisor(s) and the Training Council to determine if remediation, probation, or other actions are necessary.

Remediation: Should it be determined at any point in the training year by program supervisors that a trainee is not making sufficient progress toward competency goals, a collaborative, written remediation plan may be established by rotation supervisor(s), the Training Council, and the Training Director. Any rating of “1” on either Rotation Evaluations or the mid-year Comprehensive Evaluation will require development of a remediation plan, while ratings of “2” will result in discussions between rotation supervisors, the Training Council, and the Training Director to determine whether a remediation plan is necessary to help the intern progress in the program and attain required competency levels for program

completion. Ratings less than “4” at the end of the training year in any competency area may result in requirements for continued internship training and/or a “provisional” recommendation by the Training Director when state licensing boards or employers request verification of experience. Interns who receive ratings falling below the MLAs for the final Comprehensive Competency Evaluation may also be designated as having failed the program, depending on the nature and seriousness of the competency deficit(s). An intern who is unable to meet the program MLAs by the end of the training year will receive limited recommendations from the Training Director that outline those settings in which the former intern can and cannot function adequately.

Our Internship Handbook includes guidelines and procedures for Interns to seek redress when they believe they are not being evaluated fairly or if they believe they have been the target of discrimination or other unfair treatment by supervisors or other staff.



Downtown Reno, looking south toward the Sierra Nevada Range

Facility and Training Resources

Interns are provided with office space in the medical center equipped with a VA-networked computer. All computers have access to the VA Computerized Patient Records System (CPRS), the VA VistA system, e-mail, internet, and VA intranet. Telephones with private voicemail are also provided. Interns will be issued voice recording equipment, as needed, for the purpose of recording and reviewing psychotherapy or assessment sessions with their rotation supervisor.

Textbooks and manuals on topics such as psychodiagnostics, psychotherapy, cultural and individual diversity, law and ethics, and psychopharmacology are also available to interns. The Mental Health Service employs several full-time Medical Service Assistants (MSAs) who provide clerical and administrative support, but professional staff (including interns) are expected to enter their own written notes into CPRS (e.g., typing services are not provided by our clerical staff). Desktop computers include programs such as Word, Excel, Access, and PowerPoint, as well as VA proprietary software programs. Electronic communication between staff and teams occurs primarily through MS Outlook and MS Teams. The Mental Health Service maintains a “shared drive” where important forms and other information are archived and updated as needed. A folder specifically for internship-oriented forms, resources, and information is also accessible to interns.

Administrative Policies and Procedures

Psychology Interns are considered temporary employees with the VA. Thus, they are held to the standards of professional conduct and adherence to VA national and local policy the same as any employee. Applicable policy, directives, and procedures are outlined in both online training modules interns are required to review before the training year starts, known as “Mandatory Training for Trainees,” and in the Internship Handbook, which will be distributed electronically to each intern and which is available on the local VA shared drive. We strongly recommend that our interns carefully review the Handbook as the training year begins and thereafter as needed.

Regarding leave benefits, in addition to earned Annual Leave and Sick Leave, each Intern may be granted up to 5 days of Authorized Absence to attend professional conferences or workshops and/or to attend VA post-doctoral or VA employment interviews. Authorized Absence is granted at the discretion of the Psychology Training Director. One day of Authorized Absence may be granted for dissertation defense activities.

Training Staff

Our Psychology Training Staff includes the following psychologists (listed by program):

Mental Health Clinic

Emily Artusio, Psy.D.

- Graduate Program: The Wright Institute, Berkeley, CA, 2019
- Internship: VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: VA Northern California Health Care System
- Current position: Clinical Psychologist, Mental Health Clinic.
- Professional interests: trauma treatment, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for phobias, personality assessment/diagnostic clarification, and TBI/ADHD assessment.
- Personal interests: hiking, yoga, reading literary/historical fiction, baking, camping, picnics, and hanging out at the lake.

Drew Carr, Ph.D.

- Graduate Program: Fuller Graduate School, Pasadena CA
- Internship: Loma Linda University, School of Medicine
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: VA Greater Los Angeles
- Current position: Staff Psychologist in Mental Health Clinic, Psychology Training Program Executive Team Member
- Professional interests: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), clinical behavior analysis, holistic approaches to behavioral health care, dysexecutive syndromes and neuropsychological assessment/neurobehavior.
- Personal interests: snowboarding, hiking, music, good food, nature, climbing and very small rocks.

Anahita Kalianivala, Ph.D.

- Graduate Program: University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2019
- Internship: Memphis VA Medical Center with Clinical Health emphasis
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: Stanford University School of Medicine Pain Management Center
- Current position: Clinical Pain Psychologist within MHC and Pain/PM&R Clinic
- Professional interests: Professional interests include holistic, integrative, mind-body practices that support individuals' self-healing in an interdisciplinary setting. Treatment of chronic pain with interventions such as CBT for Chronic Pain, ACT, mindfulness, self-compassion, clinical hypnosis, and biofeedback.
- Personal interests: Eating baked goods, random dancing with my dog, yoga, Reiki, and enjoying the Sierra Nevada landscape.

Jonathan Parker, Psy.D.

- Graduate Program: Pepperdine University, 2021
- Internship: Portland VA; Portland, OR
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: N/A
- Current position: Clinical Psychologist in the Mental Health Clinic
- Professional interests: CBT, ACT, MI, trauma, substance use, self-compassion based therapy
- Personal interests: Spending time with family/friends, fantasy football, MMA/UFC, old school muscle cars, fishing, trying new restaurants.

Marie R. Smith, Ph.D.

- Graduate Program: Palo Alto University, 2012
- Internship: VA Salt Lake City Medical Center
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: University of Utah Brain Institute
- Current position: Staff Psychologist in the Mental Health Clinic and Psychological Assessment Clinic.
- Professional interests: DBT, psychological/neuropsychological assessment, and interdisciplinary consultation.
- Personal interests: Gardening, cooking/baking, and watercolor painting.

Christine Winter, Ph.D.

- Graduate Program: University of Oregon, 1990
- Internship: Gouverneur Hospital NYC for training in psychodynamic process
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: n/a
- Current position: Staff Psychologist in the Mental Health Clinic.
- Professional interests: Autism spectrum disorder, DBT, couples therapy, and rural MH issues from 25 years practice in Wyoming.
- Personal interests: Fly fishing, snowboarding, soccer refereeing, hiking, cooking and participating in our monthly gourmet group, and visiting wine country.

John G. Wyma, Ph.D., ABPP

- Graduate Program: California School of Professional Psychology, San Diego, 1987
- Internship: Dammasch State Hospital, Wilsonville, Oregon
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: n/a
- Current position: Telehealth Psychologist on Mental Health Clinic Team, Director of Psychology Training, Psychology Training Program Executive Team Member.
- Professional interests: Psychology training; treatment of depression, anxiety, chronic pain, and PTSD; couple therapy; program development; and integration of psychology and spirituality/faith.
- Personal interests: Visits with my children and grandchildren; camping, hiking and fishing; astronomy and astrophotography; travel and exploring remote, wild places; music of all kinds; gardening; barbeque; and experimenting with my outdoor pizza oven.

Behavioral Medicine, Liaison and Consultation (BMed)**James A. D'Andrea, Ph.D., ABPP**

- Graduate Program: Saint Louis University, 1994
- Internship: Long Beach VA Medical Center, Long Beach, CA
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: VA Palo Alto Health Care System fellowship in Clinical Geropsychology - Palo Alto, CA; Stanford University School of Medicine fellowship in Medicine, Geropsychology, and Caregiver Research - Stanford, CA
- Current position: Staff Psychologist in the Community Living Center
- Professional interests: CBT for dementia caregivers, managing challenging behaviors in long-term care settings, ethnogeriatrics, capacity evaluations in cognitively impaired older adults, surrogate decision making under conditions of uncertainty, and aging with a disability.
- Personal interests: Cross country glider flying in the Sierra, skiing, and "I'm a Francophile!"

Samantha “Sam” Schilling, Psy.D.

- Graduate Program: Adler University, Chicago, IL., 2017
- Internship: Iowa City VA Medical Center
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center (Albuquerque, NM)
- Current position: Home-Based Primary Care (HBPC) Psychologist
- Professional interests: Military psychology, health psychology, several EBPs (MI, CBT, ACT, and PST), death, dying, & bereavement, TBI, and the variety of dementias and neurodegenerative disorders (ALS, Huntington’s Chorea, etc.).
- Personal interests: Cycling, hiking, running, reading, meditation, and bird watching.

Valerie L. Williams, Ph.D.

- Graduate Program: University of Alabama at Birmingham, 1992
- Internship: West Virginia University Medical Center, Charleston, WV
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: n/a
- Current position: Staff Psychologist in the Behavioral Medicine Program
- Professional interests: Chronic illness, neuropsychology, medical and health psychology, clinical hypnosis, assessment and management of dementia.
- Personal interests: Horseback riding and protecting open lands from development.

Sheila Young, Ph.D.

- Graduate Program: Utah State University, 1990
- Internship: VA Sierra Nevada HCS
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: n/a
- Current position: Psychology Program Manager, Behavioral Medicine Programs; Chair of the Healthcare Ethics Committee.
- Professional interests: Consultation and liaison with medicine, surgery, and geriatrics; health psychology, neuropsychology, end of life care, professional ethics for psychologists, professional licensure and practice issues.
- Personal interests: Fiber arts, music. Involved in psychology regulation in the US and Canada, recently completed two terms on the ASPPB Board of Directors. Current member, APA Ethics Committee. Investigator, State of Nevada Board of Psychological Examiners. EPPP item writer in the Ethics domain. Currently assigned to two workstreams on the revision of the VHA Transgender Care Package.

Neuropsychological Assessment**Sarah L. Anderson, Psy.D.**

- Graduate Program: Pacific University School of Graduate Psychology, Forest Grove, 2018
- Internship: Greenville VA HCC in Greenville, NC
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: Cleveland VAMC in Cleveland, OH
- Current position: Neuropsychologist in the Behavioral Medicine Program, Psychology Training Program Executive Team Member.
- Professional interests: Neuropsychology, assessment and management of dementia, cognitive rehabilitation, and behavioral medicine for chronic medical conditions.
- Personal interests: Hiking, music (including karaoke), theater, games of all sorts, trying new food, and fun times with family.

Melissa Swanson, Ph.D.

- Graduate Program: Palo Alto University, 2009
- Internship: Central Arkansas VA Health Care System; Little Rock, AR
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: University of Toledo Medical Center; Toledo, OH
- Current position: Clinical Neuropsychologist
- Professional interests: Neuropsychology, Dementia, Movement Disorders, Stroke, Sleep
- Personal interests: Hiking, kayaking, SUP, snowshoeing, reading, music

Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Programs (PRRC)

Michele Steever, Ph.D.

- Graduate Program: University of Nevada, Reno, 2009
- Internship: VA Sierra Nevada HCS, Reno, NV
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: n/a
- Current position: Staff Psychologist in the Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Program (PRRC).
- Professional interests: Serious mental illness, DBT, FAP, and psychotherapy process.
- Personal interests: Knitting, traveling, all things Disney, and incorporating movie quotes into everyday conversation.

PTSD Clinical Team (PCT)

Kathleen Beckman, Ph.D.

- Graduate Program: California School of Professional Psychology, San Francisco, 2019.
- Internship: Sacramento VA Medical Center, Mather CA
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: n/a
- Current Position: Clinical Psychologist, PTSD Clinical Team.
- Professional interests: EBP for trauma treatment, TBI assessment, family/couples therapy, and research/program evaluation.
- Personal interests: Mountain biking, hiking, and spending time with my 3 dogs and husband.

Adam Bradford, Psy.D.

- Graduate Program: Midwestern University, Glendale, AZ, 2013
- Internship: Wichita Collaborative Psychology Internship Program, Wichita, KS
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: Stratton VA Medical Center, Albany, NY
- Current position: PTSD Clinical Team Program Manager, Psychology Training Program Executive Team Member.
- Professional interests: PTSD coordination of care, Grief and Loss, TBI/PTSD psychological assessment/diagnostic clarification, fitness/alternative therapies for PTSD symptom reduction, Virtual Reality Exposure therapy.
- Personal interests: Skiing, boating, kayaking, hiking, camping, weightlifting, home renovation, vlogging, writing, travel.

Katherine (Katie) McKenzie, Psy.D.

- Graduate Program: PGSP-Stanford PsyD Consortium, 2013
- Internship: VA Sierra Nevada HCS, Reno, NV
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: Kaiser Permanente Dept of Chronic Pain Management, San Francisco, CA.
- Current position: Staff Psychologist on the PTSD Clinical Team, Lead Psychologist, Psychology Training Program Executive Team Member, Internship Diversity Workgroup.
- Professional interests: Trained in Prolonged Exposure, ACT, TEAM-CBT, biofeedback, and certified in Cognitive Processing Therapy. Cognitive-behavioral therapies and acceptance-based practices.
- Personal interests: High desert gardening, Pilates, pottery, snowshoeing.

Don Yorgason, Ph.D.

- Graduate Program: University of Memphis, 2011
- Internship: Albuquerque, NM VAMC Southwest Consortium
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: Jackson, MS VAMC, Substance Use Disorders emphasis
- Current position: Substance Use Disorder Specialist on the PTSD Clinical Team
- Professional interests: Addictive behaviors, cultural influences on treatment, PTSD, Motivational Interviewing, and psychotherapy process.
- Personal interests: Reading, playing music, home improvement projects, long-distance running, and family time.

Addiction Disorders Treatment Team (ADTP)

Eric Diddy, Ph.D.

- Graduate Program: Alliant International University-CSPP, Fresno, 2013
- Internship: Northern Arizona VA Health Care System
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: Oklahoma City VA Health Care System
- Current position: Staff Psychologist in the Addictive Disorders Treatment Program.
- Professional interests: Substance use disorders, PTSD, behavioral health, police/law enforcement evaluations, and the integration of spirituality into the therapeutic process.
- Personal interests: Skiing, biking, kayaking, traveling, scuba diving, and fitness.

Cynthia J. Villaverde, Ph.D.

- Graduate Program: Texas Tech University, 2011
- Internship: Salt Lake City VAMC
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: Dallas VAMC post-doctoral fellowship, specializing in substance use treatment
- Current position: Staff Psychologist in the Addiction Disorders Treatment Program (ADTP).
- Professional interests: Acceptance & Commitment Therapy (ACT), depression, diagnostic assessment, motivational interviewing, addictive behaviors, harm reduction, and anger management.
- Personal interests: Spending time with family and friends, completing home projects, keeping up with my herd of dogs, keeping my hydrangeas alive in the Nevada heat, reading in hammocks, hiking, snowboarding, and music.

Inpatient Behavioral Health Unit

Carol Randall, Ph.D.

- Graduate Program: University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 2010
- Internship: VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System, Reno, NV
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: n/a
- Current position: Staff Psychologist in the Behavioral Medicine Program, with concentration on the Mental Health Inpatient Unit (MHU).
- Professional interests include assessment and treatment of severe mental illness, neuropsychology, medical and health psychology, and the integration of spirituality and mental health.
- Personal interests: Spending time with family, camping, traveling, reading, and writing.

Healthy Living Team

Deborah Henderson, Ph.D.

- Graduate Program: University of Nevada, Reno, 2006
- Internship: VA Sierra Nevada HCS
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: n/a
- Current position: Reno VA Healthy Living Team, operating within the Whole Health framework. I am also the "MOVE!" Weight Management Program behavioral health provider, lead tobacco cessation clinician, and facility Motivational Interviewing trainer.
- Professional interests: Behavioral health interventions for the prevention and management of chronic illness (with a particular interest in exercise, nutrition, diabetes and weight management); behavioral interventions generally; ACT; and stress management.
- Personal interests: Spending time with my (really big) dogs, volunteering as a master gardener in the community, countless DIY home improvement projects, reading good books, and spending time with my husband.

Integrated Behavioral Health Clinic (IBHC)

Lucas Broten, Ph.D.

- Graduate Program: Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, 2013
- Internship: Boys Town Behavioral Health, Omaha, NE
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: Boys Town Behavioral Health, Omaha, NE
- Current position: Program Manager for the Integrated Behavioral Health Care (IBHC) team.
- Professional interests: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, behavior change in health care settings, brief interventions, and treatment outcome research.
- Personal interests: Travel, camping, hiking, fishing and cooking.

Nicola De Paul, Ph.D.

- Graduate Program: Seattle Pacific University, 2014
- Internship: VA New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: Seattle VA, Seattle, WA
- Current position: Staff Psychologist in Integrated Behavioral Health Care.
- Professional interests: Behavioral sleep medicine (PAP desensitization, CBT-I), Unified Protocol, Mindfulness, adapting evidence-based protocols for primary care, clinician consultation, and intern/postdoctoral training.
- Personal interests: Time with my kiddo, great coffee, walks, being outside, finance, and yoga.

Sarah “SJ” Jutrzonka, Ph.D.

- Graduate Program: Palo Alto University, 2016
- Internship: Martinsburg VA Medical Center, Martinsburg, WV
- Post-doctoral residency/fellowship: Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center, Augusta, GA in the Interprofessional Team-Based Care program
- Current position: Psychologist in the Integrated Behavioral Health Clinic, LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinator, LGBTQ+ Special Emphasis Program Manager, Psychology Training Program Executive Team Member.
- Professional interests: Sexual health and sexual medicine, sexual health through the adult lifespan, brief assessment and treatment of neurocognitive disorders, sleep [treatment], health behavior interventions, and LGBTQ+ health.
- Personal interests: Intellectual pursuits, (NHL) hockey = happy place. Self-care includes my 2 corgis and indoor and outdoor activities.

Current and Past Trainees

Our intern cohort for 2022-23 consists of trainees from:

- The Wright Institute
- University of Indianapolis
- CUNY - City College
- Xavier University

Interns for the 2021-22 group came to us from:

- Alliant/CSPP Sacramento
- Alliant/CSPP San Diego
- University of Nevada – Reno
- Pacific University, Portland, OR



Rafting down the Truckee River



Downtown Reno at Wingfield Park

Our interns for the 2020-21 came from:

- Alliant/CSPP San Francisco
- Palo Alto University
- University of Notre Dame
- Fielding University

Other programs from which we have received interns in recent years have included:

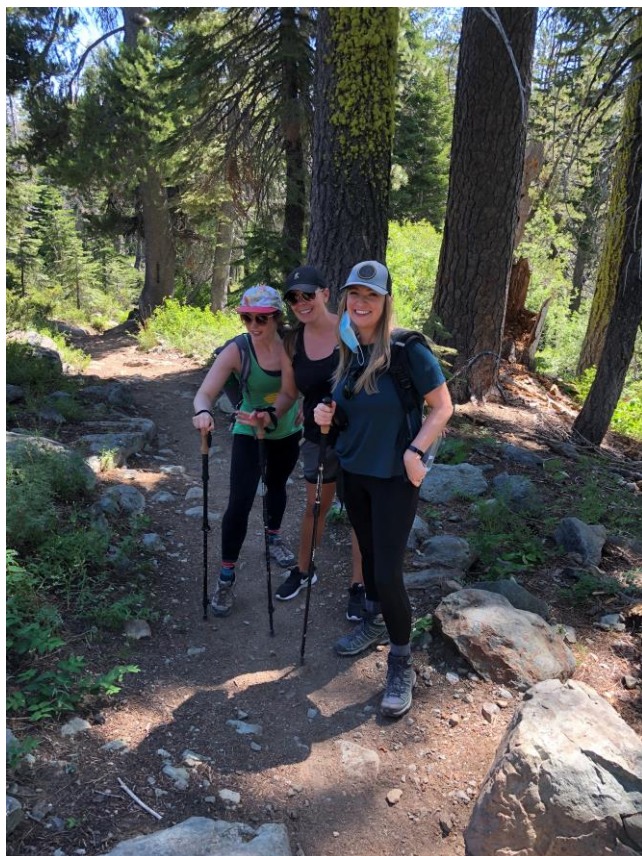
- University of Nevada - Las Vegas
- Argosy University
- PGSP-Stanford Psy.D. Consortium
- Rosemead School of Psychology
- Jackson (Mississippi) State University
- Alliant University/CSPP Los Angeles
- La Salle University
- University of Denver
- Northern Illinois University

After graduation, our interns have moved on to a variety of professional positions. We are proud that 6 of our current staff psychologists are former interns. The majority of our interns secure either post-doctoral training positions or employment in professional psychology upon completion of our program. For the three cohorts of 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22, all interns who completed the program secured post-doctoral training positions in both VA medical centers (Houston, Palo Alto, San Francisco, Battle Creek, Tampa) and other medical and counseling centers (UCLA; The Feeling Good Institute, Mountain View, CA; Kaiser Sacramento Valley, CA; Rush University; and University of Nevada – Reno Counseling Center). The types of positions into which our graduates have entered since 2000 have included VA medical centers, medical school faculty positions, various post-doctoral residencies including university counseling center programs, and private practice.

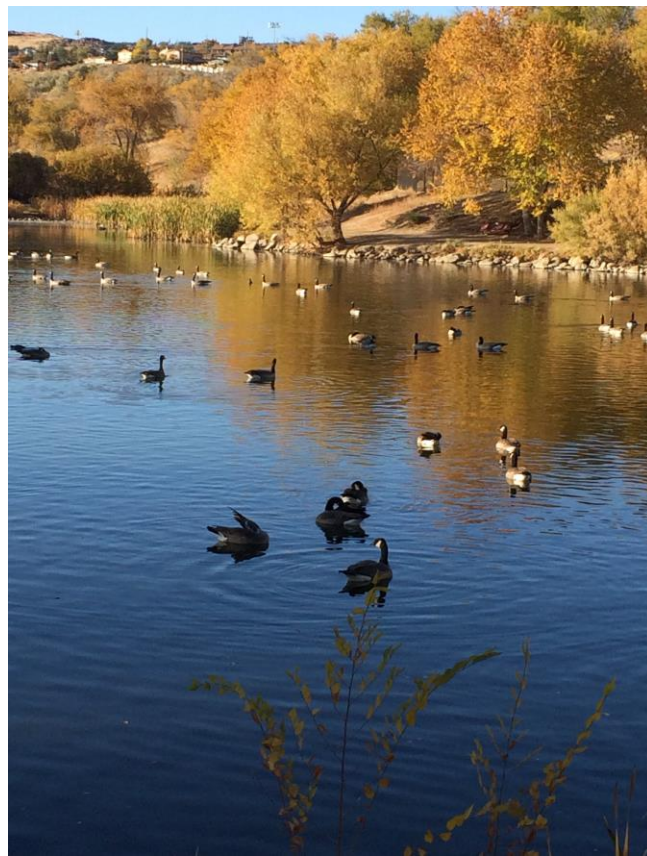
Typically, our former interns have become licensed psychologists within a year or two of graduation, many in the states of Nevada and California. A recent survey of our graduates indicated that, among respondents who had completed our program between 2009 and 2014, 87.5% (21 of 24 respondents) had achieved licensure.



September - Hot Air Balloon Races



2019-20 Cohort, Bear Lake Trail near Portola, CA



Rancho San Raphael Park, Herman Pond, Reno

Internship Admissions, Support, and Initial Placement Data

Program Disclosures

| | |
|---|----|
| Does the program or institution require students, trainees, and/or staff (faculty) to comply with specific policies or practices related to the institution's affiliation or purpose? Such policies or practices may include, but are not limited to, admissions, hiring, retention policies, and/or requirements for completion that express mission and values? | No |
| If yes, provide website link (or content from brochure) where this specific information is presented: | |
| N/A | |

Internship Program Admissions

Briefly describe in narrative form important information to assist potential applicants in assessing their likely fit with your program. This description must be consistent with the program's policies on intern selection and practicum and academic preparation requirements:

The VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System offers a psychology internship program to U.S. citizens who are enrolled in a doctoral degree program in Clinical, Counseling or Combined Psychology at an APA- or CPA- accredited institution or a Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System (PCSAS) accredited program in Clinical Science. Persons with a doctorate in another area of psychology who meet the APA or CPA criteria for respecialization training in Clinical, Counseling, or Combined Psychology are also eligible. We require that applicants have completed at least 1200 total practicum hours (assessment + intervention + supervision) prior to the start of internship. Per VHA policy, all selections are conditional pending a criminal background check and passing a physical examination. Factors considered by the committee in selecting interns include: 1) the breadth and depth of clinical experience obtained through practicum training; 2) scholarly preparation evidenced by academic transcripts, research experience, and publications and presentations; 3) evidence of personal maturity and readiness for internship training; 4) the degree to which the applicant's stated training objectives match the training opportunities available in our setting; and 5) preference to applicants who have completed or are well advanced towards the completion of their doctoral dissertation. The dissertation/project proposal must be approved by the time of application.

Does the program require that applicants have received a minimum number of hours of the following at time of application? If Yes, indicate how many:

| | | | |
|---|-----|--|-------------|
| Total Direct Contact Intervention Hours | Yes | | Amount: 400 |
| Total Direct Contact Assessment Hours | Yes | | Amount: 100 |

Describe any other required minimum criteria used to screen applicants:

Prior to the start of internship, applicants are expected to have completed at least 1200 total practicum hours (assessment + intervention + supervision). Completed hours should be accurately listed in the APPI application, along with anticipated hours, and verified by the Director of Clinical Training. Any anticipated hours at the time of the AAPI submission should be explained fully in the applicant's cover letter. In addition, applicants must be U.S. Citizens, and verification of citizenship is required prior to beginning internship. Male applicants born after 12/31/1959 must have registered for the draft by age 26 to be eligible for any US government employment, including selection as a paid VA trainee.

Financial and Other Benefit Support for Upcoming Training Year*

| | | |
|---|--------|--|
| Annual Stipend/Salary for Full-time Interns | 26,735 | |
| Annual Stipend/Salary for Half-time Interns | n/a | |
| Program provides access to medical insurance for intern? | Yes | |
| If access to medical insurance is provided: | | |
| Trainee contribution to cost required? | Yes | |
| Coverage of family member(s) available? | Yes | |
| Coverage of legally married partner available? | Yes | |
| Coverage of domestic partner available? | Yes | |
| Hours of Annual Paid Personal Time Off (PTO and/or Vacation) | 104 | |
| Hours of Annual Paid Sick Leave | 104 | |
| In the event of medical conditions and/or family needs that require extended leave, does the program allow reasonable unpaid leave to interns/residents in excess of personal time off and sick leave? | Yes | |
| Other Benefits (please describe): Dental and vision insurance, life insurance, professional development leave (e.g. dissertation defense, VA post-doctoral or employment interviews, professional conference attendance). | | |

*Note. Programs are not required by the Commission on Accreditation to provide all benefits listed in this table

Initial Post-Internship Positions

(Provide an Aggregated Tally for the Preceding 3 Cohorts)

| | 2018-2021 | |
|---|------------------|-----------|
| Total # of interns who were in the 3 cohorts | 11 | |
| Total # of interns who did not seek employment because they returned to their doctoral program/are completing doctoral degree | 1 | |
| | PD | EP |
| Academic teaching | 0 | 0 |
| Community mental health center | 0 | 0 |
| Consortium | 0 | 0 |
| University Counseling Center | 3 | 0 |
| Hospital/Medical Center | 2 | 0 |
| Veterans Affairs Health Care System | 5 | 0 |
| Psychiatric facility | 0 | 0 |
| Correctional facility | 0 | 0 |
| Psychiatric hospital | 0 | 0 |
| Health maintenance organization | 0 | 0 |
| School district/system | 0 | 0 |
| Independent practice setting | 0 | 1 |
| Other | 0 | 0 |

Note: "PD" = Post-doctoral residency position; "EP" = Employed Position. Each individual represented in this table should be counted only one time. For former trainees working in more than one setting, select the setting that represents their primary position.

Local Information

The VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System serves one of the largest geographical areas in the VA system. This area includes much of northern Nevada and northeastern California (some 380,000 square miles) with an estimated veteran population of close to 53,000. Our system also includes Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) located in Minden, NV, Fallon, NV, and Susanville, CA.



Mt. Rose Ski Resort, looking north toward Reno

The Reno-Sparks area and surrounding Truckee Meadows, located at the base of the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada and west of the Great Basin (home to another great national park), has a population of about 456,000. At an elevation of 4,400 feet, Reno's climate is generally sunny and dry, with wide variations in temperature during a 24-hour period. While climate change makes weather prediction more challenging, average days of rainfall is about 78.7, with about 9.3" total accumulation in recent years. Snowfall in an average year is about 24" total over 34 days. In the higher elevations around Reno, including at the popular ski resorts around Lake Tahoe, accumulations reach about 400" on average.



Half Dome, Yosemite National Park



Mt. Rose Ski Resort

Reno is just minutes away from the majestic Sierra-Nevada range, with its lush pine forests and crystal-clear lakes. Beautiful Lake Tahoe, about an hour's drive from Reno, is known around the world for its year-round recreational opportunities. The Reno/Tahoe area contains the world's largest concentration of ski resorts - 19 in all - and has an unusually long ski season most years. Yosemite National Park, an international treasure, is just a 3-hour drive from Reno, and numerous other opportunities for adventure and exploration are all within an easy day's drive as well. There are bountiful high desert areas nearby, too, complete with ghost towns, mining sites, and historical communities such as Virginia City, the location of the Comstock gold and silver strike of the 1850s. Our area offers many exciting opportunities for outdoor recreation, including hiking and backpacking, biking, kayaking and river rafting, boating, fishing, hunting, camping, and, of course, skiing (both downhill and cross-country).



Yosemite Falls



The Sierra Buttes range northwest of Reno

A wide variety of social and cultural activities are offered throughout the year in Reno. These range from big-name entertainment to community theatre, opera, ballet, community concerts, exhibits at Reno's excellent art museum, and activities held on the University of Nevada-Reno campus. Popular annual events include the month-long ArTown festival, the Hot Air Balloon Festival, Hot August Nights, Burning Man, the Italian Festival, September's National Championship Air Races, "Best of the West" Rib Cookoff, Street Vibrations, and much more. Many of our former interns from other states have elected to stay in Reno following internship due to the wonderful quality of life here.



Wild horses create a picture of serenity in the Virginia Range



Dog sled races present an exciting winter diversion!

Both Carson City, one of the nation's smallest state capitals, and Virginia City, preserved much the way it looked during its heyday in the 1850s, are just a few minutes drive away from Reno. Northern California is also easily accessible, with flight time to San Francisco less than an hour, and driving time to Sacramento only two hours.

We welcome your interest in VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System and look forward to answering any additional questions you may have about our training program, the medical center, and the Reno area!